

SNIE 100-9-58

26 August 1958

~~SECRET~~

Nº 333

**SPECIAL**  
**NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE**  
**NUMBER 100-9-58**

**PROBABLE DEVELOPMENTS IN  
THE TAIWAN STRAIT AREA**

*Submitted by the*

**DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE**

*The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this estimate: The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and The Joint Staff.*

*Concurred in by the*

**INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

*on 26 August 1958. Concurring were The Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State; the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army; the Director of Naval Intelligence; the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF; and the Deputy Director for Intelligence, The Joint Staff. The Atomic Energy Commission Representative to the IAC and the Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, abstained, the subject being outside of their jurisdiction.*

~~SECRET~~

## **CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**

### **DISSEMINATION NOTICE**

1. This estimate was disseminated by the Central Intelligence Agency. This copy is for the information and use of the recipient indicated on the front cover and of persons under his jurisdiction on a need to know basis. Additional essential dissemination may be authorized by the following officials within their respective departments:

- a. Director of Intelligence and Research, for the Department of State
- b. Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, for the Department of the Army
- c. Director of Naval Intelligence, for the Department of the Navy
- d. Director of Intelligence, USAF, for the Department of the Air Force
- e. Deputy Director for Intelligence, Joint Staff, for the Joint Staff
- f. Director of Intelligence, AEC, for the Atomic Energy Commission
- g. Assistant Director, FBI, for the Federal Bureau of Investigation
- h. Assistant Director for Central Reference, CIA, for any other Department or Agency

2. This copy may be retained, or destroyed by burning in accordance with applicable security regulations, or returned to the Central Intelligence Agency by arrangement with the Office of Central Reference, CIA.

3. When an estimate is disseminated overseas, the overseas recipients may retain it for a period not in excess of one year. At the end of this period, the estimate should either be destroyed, returned to the forwarding agency, or permission should be requested of the forwarding agency to retain it in accordance with IAC-D-69/2, 22 June 1953.

4. The title of this estimate, when used separately from the text, should be classified:  
**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

### **WARNING**

This material contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws, Title 18, USC, Secs. 793 and 794, the transmission or revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

#### **DISTRIBUTION:**

White House  
National Security Council  
Department of State  
Department of Defense  
Operations Coordinating Board  
Atomic Energy Commission  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

## S E C R E T

## PROBABLE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TAIWAN STRAIT AREA

## THE PROBLEM

To estimate probable developments in the Taiwan Strait area over the next few months, with particular reference to (a) Chinese Communist capabilities, (b) Chinese Communist courses of action, (c) Chinese Nationalist courses of action, and (d) Chinese Communist reactions to Chinese Nationalist and/or US measures to maintain control of the Nationalist-held offshore islands.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. We believe that Communist China's principal purpose in stepping up its military pressures in the Taiwan Strait area is to test the intentions of the US and of the Republic of China (GRC) with respect to the offshore islands. Communist China probably expects that the resultant increase in tensions will also increase pressures for its participation in world decisions, arrest any drift toward acceptance of a *de facto* "two Chinas" situation, and, especially if the US should seem reluctant to take strong measures to hold the offshore islands, accelerate the erosion of Nationalist morale. (Paras. 13-18)

2. In view of US commitments to defend Taiwan and our estimate that neither Communist China nor the USSR is willing to risk a major war at present, we believe that Communist China will not attempt to seize Taiwan or the Penghus during the next six months at least. (Para. 19)

3. Although Communist China might risk a sudden assault upon the major offshore islands, we believe it more likely that it will not attempt to do so in the immediate future, because of its fear of possible US intervention. Communist China will probably continue to exert military pressures against the Chin-men (Que-moy) and Matsu groups, seeking to avoid a clear point of military showdown. Depending on US reactions, these pressures could include intensive and sustained artillery harassment of Chin-men (Que-moy), aggressive air and naval action in the Strait area, provocative overflights of Taiwan, seizure of lightly-defended offshore islands, and a serious effort to interdict supply of the Chin-mens and Matsus. If US reactions to these pressures should lead the Chinese Communists to believe that the US would not intervene, they would probably then attempt to seize Chin-men or Matsu, or both. (Paras. 20-24)

S E C R E T

1

S E C R E T

2

4. If opposed only by Chinese Nationalist forces, the Chinese Communists have the capability to deny the Taiwan Strait to the Chinese Nationalist air force, interdict supply of the offshore islands, or seize these islands. Timely warning might not be available that preparations had been completed for an assault on either the Chin-men or the Matsu groups. (Para. 10)

5. We believe that the Chinese Communists will not be deterred from increasing their military pressures by US moves which stop short of either an explicit guarantee of the offshore islands or the commitment of US air or naval forces at least to the protection of the supply of these islands. However, if the US gave an explicit guarantee or committed its forces to the defense of the major offshore islands, the Chinese Communists would probably not attempt to seize those islands or interdict their supply. (Paras. 32-33)

6. Nevertheless, Communist China's activation of its coastal airfields and aggressive attempts to deny its airspace to overflights are probably here to stay, regardless of Chinese Nationalist and US actions. To a somewhat lesser degree, so are Chinese Communist air sorties and other probing actions in the Taiwan Strait area. (Para. 31)

7. The Chinese Nationalists will probably not resort to unilateral action against the mainland so long as Chinese Communist pressures stop short of a heavy and sustained air or artillery bombardment of the offshore islands, or a determined effort to interdict supply of Chin-men or Matsu. Should the Chinese Communists take such steps, the chances are better than even that the Nationalists would take whatever military action they could against the mainland. They might then bomb mainland targets, even in the face of explicit US objections. (Paras. 28-29)

## DISCUSSION<sup>1</sup>

### I. INTRODUCTION

8. In recent weeks, the Chinese Communists have suddenly stepped up military pressures in the Taiwan Strait area after more than two years of relative quiescence. Following a temporary burst of propaganda during the latter part of July reemphasizing the liberate Taiwan theme, they progressively activated six of the seven jet airfields in the Foochow-

Swatow area which were rushed to completion in 1956 but not made operational until now. At present approximately 200 jet fighters are based on these fields. Several air engagements with Chinese Nationalist aircraft have followed from the increased frequency and strength of Communist air patrols along the coastal area. In the last few days, there have been aggressive Chinese Communist naval actions in the Strait, intensive artillery bombardments of the Chin-men (Quemoy) group, and air action in the immediate vicinity of Chin-men. Chinese Nationalist officials, worried over the possible threat these actions pose to the security and position of the Republic of China (GRC), are seeking additional US commitments.

<sup>1</sup> See NIE 100-5-56: "Chinese Communist Capabilities in the Taiwan Strait Area and Probable Courses of Action over the Next Six Months" of 22 May 1956. For data and analysis concerning Communist China's overall military strength, see also NIE 13-58: "Communist China" of 13 May 1958. See also SNIE 100-7-58 (Limited Distribution).

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

3

9. The heightened tension in the Taiwan Strait coincided with the Middle East crisis and the recent meeting in Peiping between Khrushchev and Mao and their defense ministers. Furthermore, Communist China's actions in the Strait must be considered against the background of the belligerent tone of its statements during the past year concerning world policy in general. These developments present major questions, discussed below, concerning Chinese Communist intentions, Chinese Nationalist intentions, and the likelihood of expanded hostilities in the Taiwan Strait area.

## II. CHINESE COMMUNIST CAPABILITIES<sup>2</sup>

10. Assuming a situation in which the Nationalists continue to receive US military supplies (possibly in increased amounts), but have the responsibility for the delivery of supplies and reinforcements to the offshore islands and for their actual defense, the Chinese Communists have the following capabilities:

(a) The Chinese Communist Air Force (CCAF) could establish and maintain air superiority over the Nationalist air force in the area of the Taiwan Strait. Through the combined use of artillery, air, and naval forces, the Communists could interdict the supply of Nationalist garrisons on the offshore islands.

(b) The Chinese Communists could seize any of the smaller, lightly-defended offshore islands with the forces they now have in place. An assault on these islands could be launched quickly and probably without prior detection.

(c) The Chinese Communists have had for several years sufficient ground forces in the Foochow area (estimated 48,000) to seize Matsu. Little redeployment of naval forces would be required to support such an assault. A successful assault on Chin-men would probably require a minimum of 200,000 troops. About 80,000 are estimated to be in the Amoy area opposite Chin-men, and additional troops

<sup>2</sup> See Annex for Chinese Communist and Chinese Nationalist military strengths and capabilities in the Taiwan Strait area.

could be moved in quickly, possibly without detection. Considerable artillery to provide cover for an assault is already emplaced. Little, if any, further aircraft redeployment would be necessary to make possible bombing operations with fighter cover, or jet close support. Sufficient improvised lift could readily be assembled for an assault against either island group. Timely warning might not be available that final preparations for either operation had been completed.

11. The Chinese Communists have the ability to organize, launch, and support logistically a large-scale assault against Taiwan or the Penghus. Before undertaking such an operation, they would have to stockpile additional materiel in the vicinity of embarkation points, deploy additional troops to East China, and concentrate most of the required troops in the vicinity of the embarkation points. They would have to concentrate the bulk of their naval and amphibious strength in the area between Shanghai and Canton. Activation of additional airfields near the coast would not be necessary. The initial bombing of Taiwan preceding an assault would probably be launched without redeploying bombers. The preparations for a major assault on Taiwan probably could be identified, at least in their later stages. In view of the US commitment to defend Taiwan and the Penghus, we have not attempted an assessment of the outcome of such an assault.

## III. PROBABLE CHINESE COMMUNIST INTENTIONS

### A. Chinese Communist Motives

12. As part of their basic and continuing objectives, the Chinese Communists seek to eliminate the GRC as a rival and extend their control to Taiwan. Their efforts to accomplish this objective in the past have included military pressures against the offshore islands and psychological pressures directed at Taiwan. To date these efforts have been stymied by US commitments to the GRC — explicit and implicit — which have faced the Chinese Communists with unacceptable risks in the military field and which have served to main-

S E C R E T

SECRET

4

tain Nationalist morale and will to resist at a sufficiently high level to limit the impact of Chinese Communist threats and inducements.

13. The Chinese Communists probably have become more impatient and frustrated as the passage of time has failed to visibly advance them toward their goal of ending the existence of the GRC. Over the past two years their tactics have failed to stimulate defection on Taiwan, or to prevent wider international acceptance of a *de facto* "two China" situation. They have also failed to displace the GRC as the representative of China in the UN or to gain the participation of Peiping in world decisions.

14. Thus, the Chinese Communists probably feel that a period of tension in the Taiwan Strait would be useful in reminding the world of Peiping's strength and determination to achieve its objectives. Beyond this, they probably believe that world trends and the passage of time have brought some weakening in Nationalist morale and determination, and they may hope that the US has become less resolved to assist in the defense of the offshore islands. They have probably set out to test these propositions and may view the occupation of the coastal airfields as a significant first step, since the Nationalists had openly threatened in 1956 to retaliate if such a move took place.

15. Broader considerations may also be influencing the Chinese Communists in the present situation. In recent months Chinese Communist leaders and their propaganda have indicated impatience with some of the results of the general Bloc line of peaceful coexistence. The Chinese Communists have argued that the present world balance of power is highly favorable to the Bloc, that the West is a "paper tiger," that the Bloc could destroy the West in nuclear warfare without receiving mortal damage, and that the present world situation is one of "revolutionary opportunity" for the expansion of Bloc influence. We do not suggest that the Chinese Communists are now prepared to push the Bloc into general war or that the Chinese Communists are urging this policy on Moscow. However, we do believe that the Chinese Commu-

nists now rate the risks involved in local wars to be somewhat less than they did immediately prior to the sputnik era. We also believe that they are less sensitive than previously to opinion in the Free World, less concerned to maintain a peaceful pose, and more inclined to seek to gain their ends by reminders of their growing power.

16. A desire to discuss Taiwan Strait problems was probably responsible in part for the recent meeting of Khrushchev and Mao. In addition, Chinese Communist uneasiness regarding Khrushchev's fast footwork toward a summit meeting may also have been a factor. In any event, it is almost certain that both partners felt that the pace of world developments required closer coordination of their policies. Moreover, they probably reached new agreements concerning the nature and extent of future military cooperation, possibly including missiles and nuclear weapons.

17. The USSR probably has no objection to the heightening of tension in the Taiwan Strait; indeed it may consider this development as serving its interests. We believe that the USSR and Communist China are in general agreement on policy in the Taiwan Strait. However, if the Chinese Communists were to adopt courses of action involving substantial risk of a major military clash with US forces, the USSR would almost certainly seek to restrain Peiping.

18. We believe that Peiping will continue for some time to test US and GRC intentions and to maintain an atmosphere of tension. Chinese Communist leaders will not expect to quickly achieve their basic objectives by this course of action. However, they probably expect that a demonstration of their power will serve to undermine Nationalist morale, discredit talk of a "return to the mainland," and make some Nationalists more receptive to psychological pressures and inducements, particularly if the US should fail to give strong support to the Nationalists. Moreover, they probably hope that increased tensions in the Taiwan Strait will generate pressures for international meetings in which Communist China would be an indispensable participant.

SECRET

S E C R E T

5

## B. Possible Chinese Communist Courses of Action

19. In view of US commitments to defend Taiwan and our estimate that neither Communist China nor the USSR is willing to risk a major war at present, we believe that Communist China will not attempt to seize Taiwan or the Penghus during the next six months at least.

20. The Chinese Communists might assault Chin-men or Matsu, or both, within the near future. They have the capability to seize the islands but are probably deterred because of their fear of possible US intervention. If the Chinese Communists were to attempt to seize these islands, they would probably strive for a quick military victory. This, they would probably estimate, would give the US too short a period for political countermeasures or for effective military intervention by non-nuclear means. The decision to launch such an attack would probably be based on an estimate that the US would not use nuclear weapons in defense of the offshore islands. Moreover, the Chinese Communists probably would estimate that, even if the US employed nuclear weapons, it would do so on a limited scale, and that the adverse international political and psychological consequences of any use of nuclear weapons would seriously damage the position of the US and work to the long-run advantage of Communist China.

21. However, we believe it more likely that the Chinese Communist plan is to apply a broad range of military and psychological pressures, designed so as to avoid a clear point of military showdown. These pressures will be intended to intensify the war of nerves in the Taiwan Strait and to test US intentions with respect to the offshore islands. If the US reaction to these pressures should lead the Chinese Communists to believe that the US would not intervene, they would probably then attempt to seize Chin-men or Matsu, or both.

22. Although the Chinese Communists may temporarily revert to lower levels of military pressures, we believe that they intend to expand their present level of military activity. They could do this by aggressive air action

seeking to deny the Strait area to Nationalist aircraft, by increased naval activity, and by intensive and sustained artillery harassment of the Chin-men island group. In this case, the Communists would probably intercept Nationalist patrols over the Taiwan Strait and conduct air raids on the offshore islands. They might conduct provocative overflights of Taiwan. These operations could result in accidental clashes with US aircraft operating in the area. Such levels of activity could lead to numerous air engagements with the Nationalists which, if continued, would cause serious attrition of the Nationalist air force, and increase considerably the sense of insecurity and uncertainty among Nationalist leaders and armed forces. The Communists might hope that the levels of activity would discourage the Nationalists and perhaps even lead them to evacuate the offshore islands.

23. Concurrent with such increased activity, and as a further step to test US intentions, the Chinese Communists might seize one or more of the lightly-defended offshore islands. This could be done quickly and with little or no prior warning. Such a development would have serious adverse psychological impact on the Nationalists generally, and especially those on the major offshore islands of Chin-men and Matsu. In determining the degree of risk involved, the Chinese Communists might make a distinction between those small islands often considered a part of the Chin-men and Matsu groups, and the more isolated islands.

24. The Chinese Communists might make a serious effort to interdict supply of the major offshore islands. If the Communists took this course of action they would probably estimate that they were running serious risk of US intervention, even though there had been no prior indications of explicit US intentions. The isolation of the offshore islands could be accomplished by a combination of air, artillery, and naval action. Artillery action alone could seriously hamper resupply of Chin-men. However, it would probably take two or three months of intensive effort to interdict supply of the offshore islands to the point where reserve stocks on these islands became criti-

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

6

cally low. In the event that the Chinese Communists had conducted interdiction operations against Chin-men and Matsu over a period of time without encountering a clear indication of US intention to defend these islands, we believe that they would probably then invade them if surrender did not seem imminent. The Nationalists do not have the capability to evacuate their garrisons in the face of Communist opposition.

#### IV. PROBABLE CHINESE NATIONALIST COURSES OF ACTION

25. Thus far, the Nationalist reaction to increased Communist pressures has been moderate. The Nationalists have reemphasized their determination to hold Chin-men and Matsu. They have challenged some Communist aircraft over the coastal area and have continued their reconnaissance effort. However, they have refrained from bombing the newly activated Communist airfields. They have increased their efforts to secure additional military aid and firmer defense commitments from the US.

26. The Chin-mens and Matsus have immense importance to the GRC. About one third of its combat troops are committed to their defense. These islands are a vital element in the Taiwan early warning system. They are also a symbol of GRC prestige. They sustain the hope of a return to the mainland, and some Nationalist officials may consider them instruments which might be used to embroil the US in war with Communist China. The GRC is probably convinced at present that it must hold Chin-men and Matsu in order to keep alive the hope of a return to the mainland, to prevent a disastrous blow to morale, to preclude any further decline in the prestige and international position of their government, and to assist in the defense of Taiwan.

27. We believe, therefore, that the loss of the offshore islands would under any circumstances have a severe effect on Nationalist morale. The impact of such a loss would be of the greatest severity if the US withheld its support and the Chinese Nationalist troops stationed on the islands were defeated by a Chinese Communist assault. The impact of

the loss would be of less severity if the troops were evacuated with US assistance. In any case, the Nationalist government, if it is to survive, would require new and convincing demonstrations that the US was still determined to protect Taiwan and to preserve the GRC's international position.

28. The major courses of action open to the Nationalists, without US participation, are very limited. The most important would be to launch air attacks against mainland targets. In view of Taiwan's vulnerability to retaliation, and in the absence of US approval, the Nationalist leaders probably will not resort to this course of action so long as Communist military pressures stop short of a heavy and sustained air or artillery bombardment of the offshore islands or of a determined effort to interdict supply of Chin-men or Matsu.

29. However, should the Chinese Communists take such steps, we believe that the chances are better than even that the Nationalist leaders would take whatever military action they could against the mainland. They might bomb the mainland even in the face of explicit US objections, with the expectation that the resulting situation would force the US to intervene.

#### V. PROBABLE CHINESE COMMUNIST REACTIONS TO CHINESE NATIONALIST AND/OR US MEASURES TO MAINTAIN CONTROL OF THE OFFSHORE ISLANDS

30. The Chinese Communists probably hope that their military initiative in the Taiwan Strait can be conducted in such a way as to put the onus of aggressor on the US or the GRC for any counteraction they take. Communist China's leaders probably estimate that while their increased pressures will cause some world sympathy to develop for the plight of the beleaguered offshore islands, the predominant world reaction will be fear of war and a desire that the US take steps to lessen tensions and end a threat to peace. Peiping and Moscow probably conclude that any additional moves by the US to maintain Nationalist control of the offshore islands will tend to isolate the US diplomatically on this issue. Thus it should be anticipated that Bloc diplo-

S E C R E T



S E C R E T

7

macy and propaganda will seek international political gains from any such US moves; the greater the US commitment, the more vigorous the Communist political effort.

31. Communist China's activation of its coastal airfields and aggressive attempts to deny its air space to overflights are probably here to stay, regardless of Chinese Nationalist and US actions. To a somewhat lesser degree, so are Chinese Communist air sorties and other probing actions in the Taiwan Strait area. Thus, even though certain US/GRC reactions may cause the Chinese Communists to refrain from attempting to seize the offshore islands or interdict their supply, some Communist pressure will continue.

32. The Chinese Communists will probably not be deterred from increasing military pressures against the Nationalists by US moves which stop short of either an explicit guarantee of the offshore islands or the active commitment of US air or naval forces to protection of the supply of these islands. Although the Chinese Communists might become a lit-

tle more cautious, we do not believe that they would abandon their program of pressures as a result of lesser measures such as the more frequent appearance of US ships and aircraft in the area, the provision of improved weapons to the GRC, or the issuing of warnings in general terms to the Chinese Communists.

33. However, the Chinese Communists would probably not attempt to seize the major offshore islands or interdict their supply in the face of an explicit US guarantee or the active participation of US naval and air forces in the protection of these islands or their supply. We still think that the Chinese Communists wish to avoid large-scale clashes with US forces. Moreover, Moscow would probably be urging restraint on the Chinese Communists at this point. Nevertheless, there would be considerable risk of occasional clashes between US and Chinese Communist ships and aircraft. The possibility should not be excluded that such clashes might be invited in order to create an incident which could be brought before the UN or some other international forum.

S E C R E T

SECRET

8

## ANNEX

CHINESE COMMUNIST AND CHINESE NATIONALIST MILITARY STRENGTHS  
AND CAPABILITIES IN THE TAIWAN STRAIT AREA

## I. Chinese Communist Ground Forces

1. The Chinese Communists have an estimated 894,000 ground troops organized into 12 armies and supporting units in the Nanking, Foochow, and Canton military districts. Of these armies, all of which are probably first class units, three are stationed in the immediate Taiwan Strait area in the vicinity of Swatow, Amoy, and Foochow. The estimated strength of these armies is 46,000 each. Within the Foochow Military Region there are 11 combat divisions with a total strength of 107,300. In addition, there are 20 combat divisions in Nanking Military Region with a strength of 244,700 and 16 combat divisions in Canton Military Region with a strength of 223,000. We have no confirmed reports that additional units are being moved to the coastal areas. However, such troop movements could take place rapidly and possibly without detection.

2. The reorganization of the Chinese Communist Army, which has occurred since 1954, has given them a more balanced force which is better able to carry out a coordinated amphibious assault. In any amphibious assault against the offshore islands it is believed that the Chinese Communists would be capable of attaining at least a three to one numerical superiority, although they would not necessarily employ all such forces. The actual numerical size of the assault force would, of course, depend upon the particular objective attacked. The Communists would probably employ no more than a reinforced regiment against a lightly defended island such as Kao-teng (700 men). They would undoubtedly amass 200,000 men for an attack on Chin-men (Quemoy). Such forces would be capable of successful assault operations provided the Communists also had air and naval superiority in the area.

3. The Communists are estimated to have over 400 field artillery pieces in the Chin-men area, including at least 36 152-mm howitzers and/or gun/howitzers and 120 122-mm guns and/or howitzers. These weapons can completely cover Chin-men Island from positions around Amoy Harbor. Effective interdiction, however, is restricted by the extreme range and the limited number of pieces that can reach all targets on the island. Moreover, the Communists probably could not interdict resupply operations without effective aerial observation.

4. There are an estimated 184 Chinese Communist field artillery pieces in the Matsu area including 24 122-mm guns and/or howitzers. The relatively small number of Communist pieces that can reach the Matsu Islands limits the effectiveness of interdiction in this area.

## II. Chinese Nationalist Ground Forces

5. Nearly a fourth of Nationalist China's 450,000-man Army (one third of its combat strength) is deployed on the offshore islands — 86,000 on the Chin-men group and 23,000 on the Matsu group. Of the remainder 16,000 are on the Penghus (Pescadores) and 331,000 on Taiwan itself.

6. The defensive position of Nationalist forces is good. Mines have been laid in the waters off Chin-men. Beaches on both island groups are protected by multiple belts of barb wire and concrete and steel hedge-hogs and by land mine fields. Dug in positions along and behind the beaches are mutually supporting. Both island groups probably have 30 days of all supplies except ammunition. There is probably a 40-day stock of ammunition on the Chin-mens and a 50-day stock on the Matsus. Moreover, the state of training and morale of Nationalist forces on the offshore

SECRET

S E C R E T

9

islands is good. They possess the will to fight, and in the event of attack will undoubtedly receive the strongest support from Taiwan which the GRC is capable of giving.

7. There are serious weaknesses in the Nationalist position, however. On Chin-men, defensive positions are concentrated in a crust along the beaches; the interior of the island is only lightly held. The southeast portion of the island is relatively weakly defended, and the excellent beach in that area is used for off-loading supplies. Nationalist forces are out-gunned by the Communists' 393 field artillery pieces (estimated — based on TO&E) 210 of which can be positioned to cover part or all of the area of the Chin-men group. The Nationalists have only 308 artillery pieces. On the Matsu Island group, also, the Nationalists are out-gunned. As shown above, the Communists have an estimated (based on TO&E) 184 field artillery pieces, 68 of which can reach Kaoteng and Peikan. In addition, there are an unknown quantity of artillery pieces capable of firing on Nankan. Of the Nationalists' 80 artillery pieces, only 8 155-mm guns can reach Communist positions. With the islands of the Matsu group separated by from three to eight miles, Nationalist positions on one island cannot be supported from another. For these reasons, and because of the proximity of the islands to the mainland, the Nationalists, without air and naval superiority, could not hold them for more than a few days against a determined Communist assault.

8. Chinese Nationalist strength figures on the offshore islands occupied by regular Nationalist forces are as follows:

(1) Chin-mens

- a. Chin-men — 74,100
- b. Little Chin-men — 10,450
- c. Ta-tan — 1,300
- d. Erh-tan — 250

(2) Matsus

- a. Nankan — 11,500
- b. Peikan — 5,000
- c. Kaoteng — 700
- d. Tungchuan — 2,300
- e. Hsichuan — 3,300

### III. Chinese Communist Navy

9. The personnel strength of the Chinese Communist Navy totals 58,000, including 8,000 in naval aviation. Its operational units include the following:

Destroyers (DD)	4
Submarines: *	
Short range	4
Medium range	4
Long range	10
Escort Vessels (DE)	4
Patrol Vessels	249
Includes:	
Patrol Escort (PF)	16
Sub-Chaser (PC)	29
Motor Torpedo Boat (PT)	120
Mine Vessels	31
Includes:	
Fleet Minesweeper (MSF)	4
Landing Ships	53
Service Craft (approx)	300

\* Submarine strength is being increased by new construction at the rate of 4 per year.

10. The naval air arm includes 490 combat aircraft.

11. The navy has growing capabilities for medium, short and long range submarine operations and for surface activity in coastal waters. It has an extensive capability for both offensive and defensive mining operations. Coupled with Communist air power, the navy has a significant capability against Chinese Nationalist forces in coastal waters.

12. With aerial support in the Taiwan Strait, the navy has the capability for operations in the Matsu and Chin-men areas. We believe that with a southward deployment of units currently assigned to the Yellow Sea Fleet, it could effectively interdict the supply lines to the offshore islands.

13. In an amphibious assault against Chin-men or Matsu it is unlikely that larger amphibious units (LST, LSM) would be employed due to the extremely adverse beaching conditions. The Communists have the capability, however, of launching a strong assault employing lesser amphibious units (LCU, LCM) and such non-naval craft as might be required. Naval combat units (DI, Gun Boats, etc.) would probably be employed off the seaward side of Chin-men. The deep, less re-

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

10

stricted waters off Matsu would permit a freer employment of such combat units in support of an assault particularly after the heavier Nationalist shore batteries were reduced.

14. In an amphibious operation against the Penghus and Taiwan with relatively unrestricted waters and more extensive beaches, all available strength afloat could be employed. Using available amphibious shipping, including merchant landing ship types, a balanced force of approximately three rifle divisions could be lifted in such an assault.

#### IV. Chinese Nationalist Navy

15. The personnel strength of the Nationalist Navy (GRCN) totals 58,000 including 25,400 marines. The navy, scheduled to be augmented by 1 DD and 2 LST within the next year, consists of the following:

Destroyer (DD)	4
Escort Vessel (DE)	5
Patrol Escort (PF)	7
Escort (PCE)	2
Sub-chaser (PC)	16
Motor Gunboat (PGM)	2
Motor Torpedo Boat	6
<u>Mine Vessels</u>	
Minelayer Coastal (MMC)	2
Fleet Minesweeper (MSF)	5
Coastal Minesweeper (MSC)	2
<u>Miscellaneous</u>	
Amphibious Vessels	39
Aux. and Service Craft	71

16. The general state of training is good. Logistical support of the offshore islands is adequate for present requirements. Over-all combat effectiveness has continued to improve, with operational availability on the increase due to improvements in maintenance and supply, overhaul and improved operating procedures.

17. The navy is primarily a defensive force with limited capabilities. It can conduct limited ASW and mine warfare. It can provide lift for amphibious counterlandings on the offshore islands in strength up to one division. However, the GRCN would be unable to oppose successfully the relatively large force of Chinese Communist PT boats and submarines, which is capable of operating in the Taiwan Strait. Lack of cooperative air sup-

port by the Nationalist air force has hampered the navy in operations requiring such support. In the light of Chinese Communist air strength in the Taiwan Strait, this deficiency could become critical.

18. The Marine Corps with a personnel strength of 25,400 has the men, equipment and skill to make it capable of executing modern amphibious operations. The Marine Corps continues to have the capability of planning and executing an amphibious operation at division or brigade level against light to moderate resistance providing adequate naval and air support is available.

#### V. Chinese Communist Air Force (CCAF) and Naval Air Force (CNAF)

19. Communist China's air forces comprise a strong, modern tactical force. Their equipment, training and deployment are oriented toward air defense and tactical support operations. They have a nucleus of battle experienced fighter pilots who gained experience against US air tactics in the Korean War.

20. Chinese Communist air defense is organized around a good early warning system, with a good ground control intercept capability in daylight and clear air. The CCAF night and bad weather intercept capability is limited somewhat by a shortage of electronic airborne intercept equipment and a poor height finding capability at higher altitudes. In the coastal area between Hong Kong and Shanghai, their ground controlled intercept capability probably would be good.

21. The combined Chinese Communist air forces include 2,460 jet aircraft of which 1,785 are fighters and 450 are high bombers. In the coastal area opposite Taiwan, there are seven airfields that could sustain jet operations. Of these, six are presently operational and the other could quickly become operational. There are no bomber aircraft operating from airfields directly opposite Taiwan. However, Taiwan is well within range of Chinese Communist jet light bombers stationed at airfields outside the immediate area. The redeployment of some piston and light bomber forces to rear areas directly behind the coastal airfields is expected.

S E C R E T

SECRET

11

22. There can be little doubt that the vastly outnumbered Chinese Nationalist Airforce would be quickly overcome by Chinese Communist air power in any decisive contest, unless the Nationalist forces were supported by US air power.

**CCAF — CNAF**  
(Total Inventory)

Jet Fighter .....	1,785
Piston Fighter .....	275
Jet Light Bomber .....	450
Piston Tactical Attack .....	505
Land Based ASW .....	20
Piston Medium Bomber .....	20
Piston Transport .....	260
Other Jet .....	225
Other Piston .....	810
Total .....	4,350

## VI. Chinese Nationalist Air Force

### A. CURRENT STRENGTH

23. The Chinese Nationalist Air Force (CAF), a separate service on a par with the other Nationalist Chinese military services, is the strongest indigenous non-Communist air force in Asia.

**CAF**  
(Total Inventory)

Jet Fighter .....	450
Jet Light Bomber .....	1
Piston Tactical Attack .....	9
Land Based ASW .....	10
Piston Transport .....	143
Other Jet .....	46
Other Piston .....	167
Total .....	826

24. The CAF has an inventory of over 800 aircraft, of which almost two-thirds are in operational units; of these aircraft, an excess of 450 combat type permits fully equipped combat units. Personnel strength totals nearly 88,000 and includes almost 1,300 trained pilots (there are, in addition, almost 800 trained pilots occupying command and staff positions not requiring frequent flying); an additional 250 pilots are in training.

### B. CURRENT CAPABILITIES

25. The principal tactical capability of the CAF at present is photo reconnaissance within a 750-mile range of Taiwan, and limited night reconnaissance up to a 1,000-mile range. Missions are currently regularly flown over the Communist Chinese mainland by the RB-57 and RF-84F aircraft (and occasionally by RF-86F's) of the CAF's two tactical reconnaissance squadrons.

26. A fairly good organization for the control and functioning of air-ground support, modeled after that of the USAF, has recently been activated. Considerable practice will be required to insure technical effectiveness of this system and its components.

27. Despite the existence of a well organized early warning/ground controlled intercept system and 6 F-86F squadrons with day fighter capability, the CAF could be expected to offer only delaying action against an air assault by Communist China. This defense would be limited to daylight hours and would be of short duration, pending the arrival of USAF support.

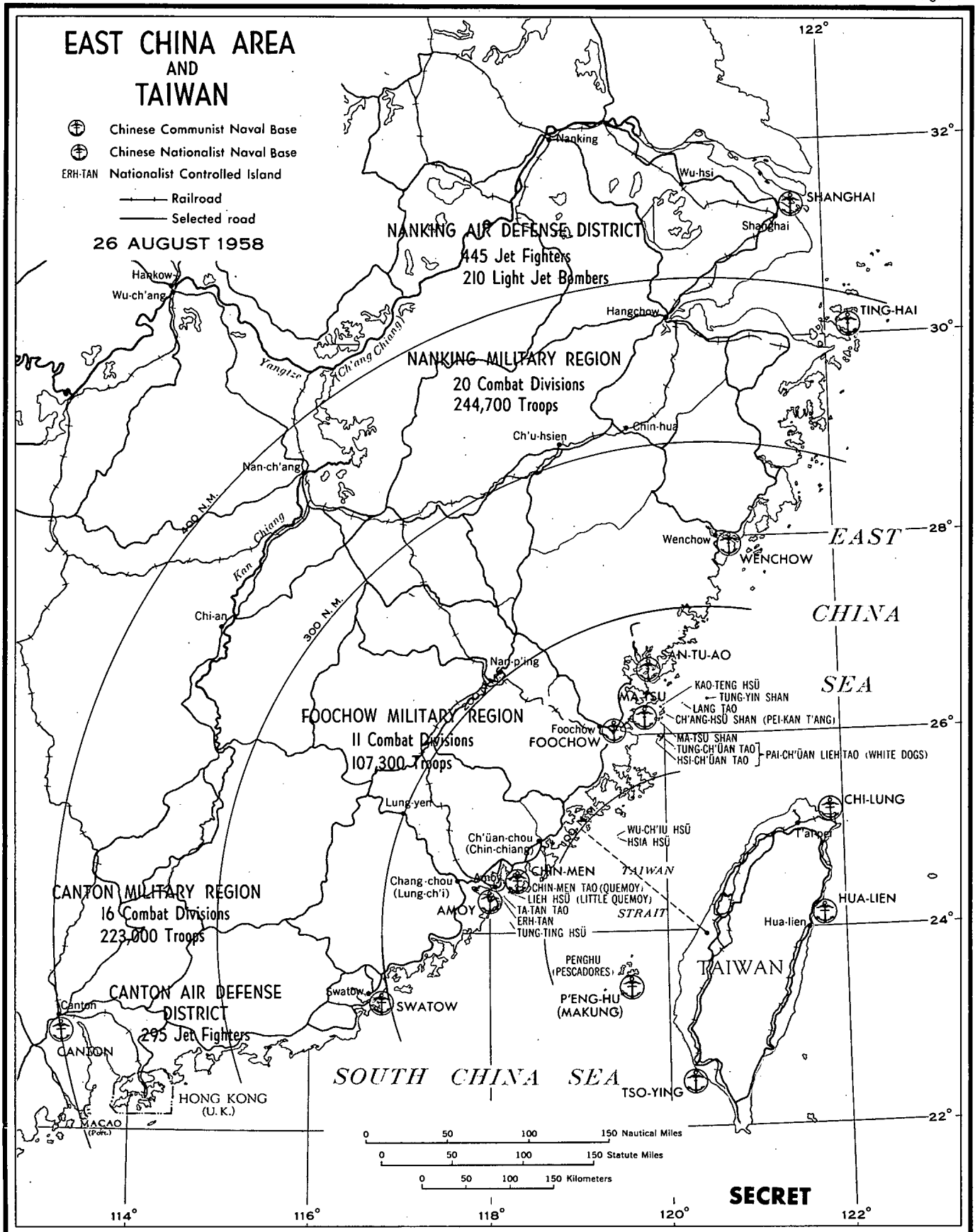
28. The CAF has no strategic air capability nor are any aircraft programmed through MAP that would provide a capability. The CAF would be capable of giving limited support to amphibious landings or to defense against such landings, as well as harassing hostile shipping within the Taiwan Strait. The capability of the 33d Bomb Squadron (10 P4Y-2's) is limited to patrol activities over the Taiwan Strait.

29. The air transport capability of the CAF has been enhanced considerably over the last two years. Airdrop techniques have improved with the training derived in joint operations and in pamphlet and food airdrops in South China. The two air transport groups — one specializing in air transport and the other in troop carrier operations — are capable of performing rear area air supply, supporting initial amphibious operations limited with airdrops and paratroop operations, and assisting in psychological warfare operations through food and pamphlet drops on the Chinese mainland.

SECRET

**SECRET**

Figure 1



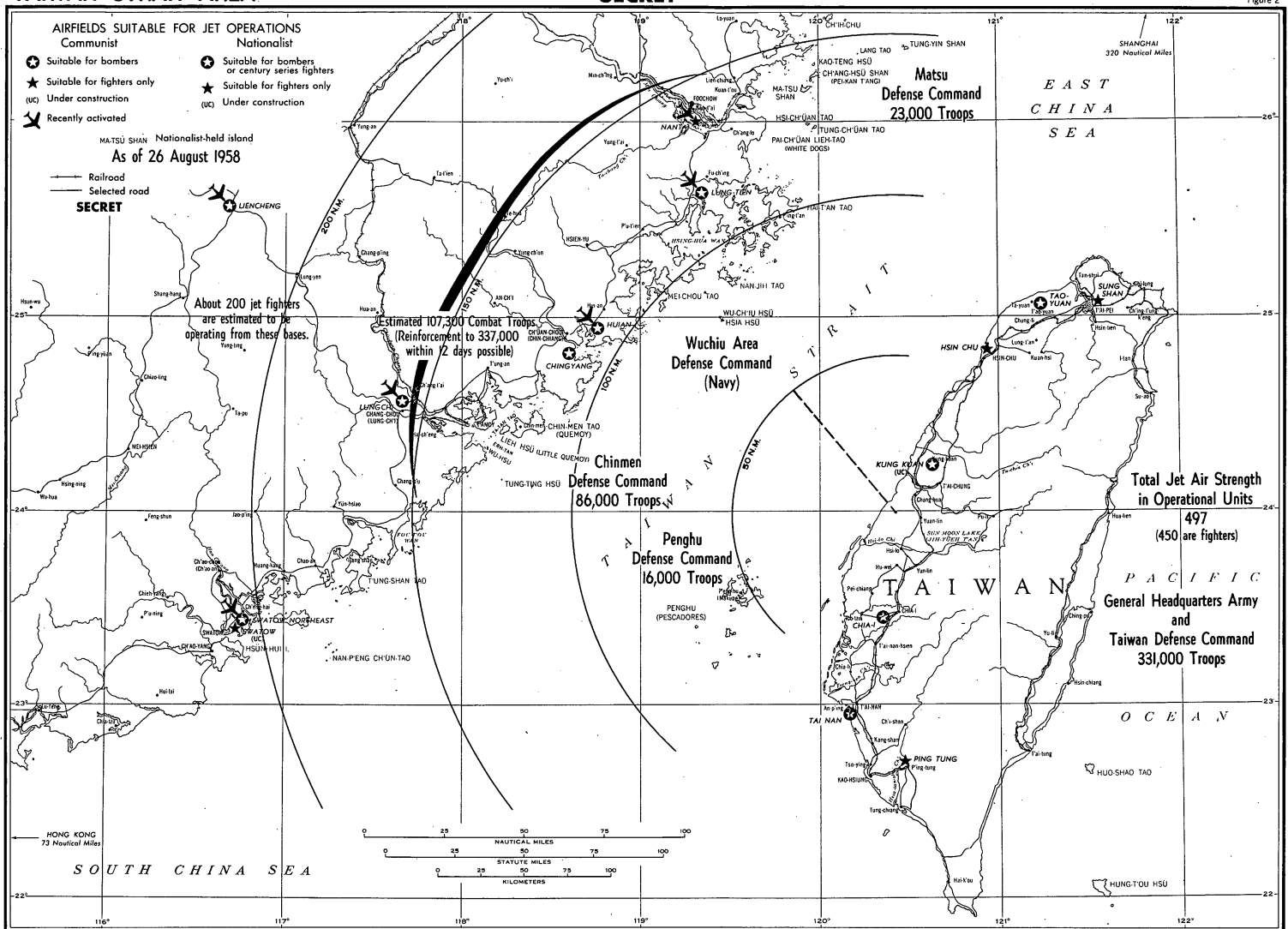
27134 8-58

**SECRET**

## TAIWAN STRAIT AREA

SECRET

Figure 2



SECRET

**SECRET**

**SECRET**